

# **Back to the future**

## **Volume 2**

### **Executive Summary**

Thirty Years of Minnesota  
Juvenile Justice Policy and Practice  
1980–2010

**March 2014**



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS

## Acknowledgements

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety thanks the following individuals for taking the time to provide peer review for this report. Participation in peer review does not constitute endorsement of the report's findings or recommendations by the reviewer or their organization.

- Julie Atella, Research Scientist. *Wilder Research*
- Jeri Boisvert, Executive Director (Retired). *Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs*
- Nancy Lageson, Minnesota School Safety Center Director. *Minnesota Department of Public Safety Homeland Security and Emergency Management*
- Perry Moriearty, Associate Professor. *University of Minnesota School of Law*
- Michael Peterson, Research Analyst. *Minnesota State Demographic Center*
- Nancy Riesterberg, School Climate Specialist. *Minnesota Department of Education*
- Ebony Ruhland, Research Director. *Council on Crime and Justice*
- Hon. Kathryn Smith, Senior District Judge. *Minnesota's Eighth Judicial District*
- Julie Snyder, Senior Facility Inspector. *Minnesota Department of Corrections*

Thank you to Bill Wyss, *Minnesota Department of Human Services*, for sharing his expertise in children's mental health, and to Nancy Riesterberg, Carol Thomas, and Sheila Oehrlein of the *Minnesota Department of Education* for their assistance with school-based statutes, policies and funding. Thank you also to Tyler Reedy, Master of Social Work intern, for his contributions to the literature review and data analysis.

This report is made possible in part by funding from the federal Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics (Award # 2012-BJ-CX-K001). The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice. The receipt of awarding-agency funding does not constitute official recognition or endorsement of any project.

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Preferred Citation: Swayze, D., & Buskovich, D. (2014). Back to the Future: Thirty Years of Minnesota Juvenile Justice Policy and Practice, 1980-2010.  
Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs.

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## Introduction

In the 30 years between 1980 and 2010, a dramatic change occurred in both the volume and rate of youth contact with the U.S. juvenile justice system. Juvenile crime rose significantly through the 1980s and most of the 1990s before a pattern of decline emerged in the late 1990s and into new millennium. By 2010, both the volume and rate of youth arrests in the United States were comparable to levels observed in the early 1980s.

The title of this report, *Back to the Future*, pays homage to the 1980s cinema blockbuster of the same name, in which a teenaged Michael J. Fox accidentally travels back in time 30 years to 1955. While there he inadvertently alters the course of his own future which he must set right before returning to 1985. While his character is clear as to what must be done to set his future right, less clear are what combination of policy, practice and social conditions over the past 30 years aligned to result in the sustained decrease in juvenile crime.

*Volume One* of this two-part report summarizes the past 30 years of juvenile justice data in Minnesota. These data illustrate that the rise and subsequent fall of juvenile crime observed at the national level was also evident in Minnesota. Detailed in *Volume One* are Minnesota's data on juvenile arrests, court petitions, out-of-home placements and community-based supervision between 1980 and 2010.

*Volume Two* of the series is a compendium to *Volume One* and explores juvenile justice system policies and practices in Minnesota between 1980 and 2010. Many changes to law, policy and procedure occurred at both the federal and state level during this period. While some changes were a reaction to rapidly rising crime perpetrated by youth, others were proactive initiatives intended to stem delinquency through new strategies and evidence-based practices.

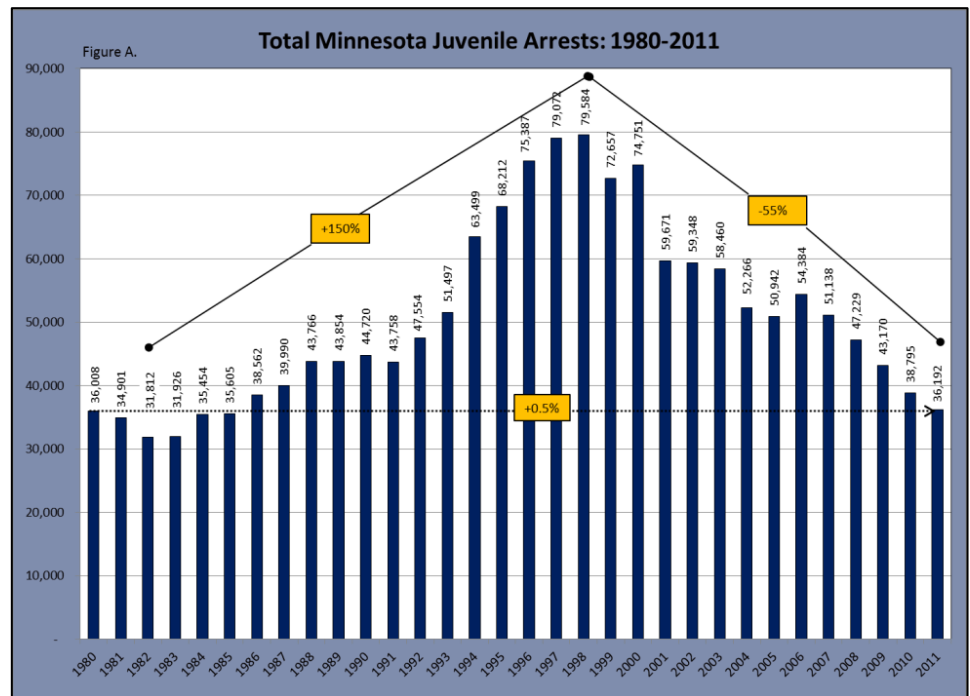
In addition to changes in policy, practice and philosophy concerning youth, *Volume Two* explores changes in the macro-environment of Minnesota and the nation. Included are data about the prevalence of poverty and unemployment, the strength of the economy, the value of wages, and school engagement. This report also provides details on federal funds allocated to states for crime-and-delinquency prevention and intervention activities between 1980 and 2010.

## Volume One Reprise

Before venturing into changes in the juvenile justice system and the conditions of the macro socio-economic environment, it is helpful to review the data on youth involved in Minnesota's juvenile justice system over time. These data are the backdrop for policies and funding decisions made between 1980 and 2010. The data presented below are explained in greater detail in *Volume One* of this report series.<sup>1</sup>

### Juvenile Arrest Data

Over thirty years of juvenile arrest data (Figure A) illustrate that juvenile arrests in Minnesota increased 150 percent between 1982 and the peak year of 1998. The number and rate of juvenile arrests for violent crime peaked in Minnesota and nationally in 1994.<sup>a</sup> Conversely, between 1998 and 2011, juvenile arrests declined in Minnesota by over half (-55%). Ultimately, the number of arrests in 2011 (36,192) was comparable to the number recorded in 1980 (36,008). Presently, Minnesota is experiencing low levels of juvenile justice system involvement not seen since the early 1980s.



### Other Justice System Stages

Data collected on juvenile petitions to court, admissions to secure and non-secure correctional facilities, and youth placed on probation closely mirror the rise and fall of juvenile arrests in Minnesota:

- The peak year for juvenile court petitions in Minnesota was 1998, consistent with the peak year of arrests. Between 1998 and 2011, juvenile petitions declined from over 63,000 to just under 34,000 (-47%).
- Juvenile correctional facility admission data, available since 1999, illustrate that 2001 was the peak year with over 20,000 secure admissions and nearly 8,000 non-secure admissions. As of 2011, there were just over 9,000 secure admission (-56%), and just over 5,000 non-secure admissions (-37%).
- The number of youth on probation supervision peaked in 1999 with a year-end count of 18,000 juvenile probationers. Between 1999 and 2011, the number of juveniles on probation at year's end declined by over half (-53%) to approximately 8,500.

<sup>a</sup> Violent crimes as defined by the FBI include murder, aggravated assault, robbery and rape.

## Other Youth Serving Systems

Juvenile justice is not the only arena in which outcomes for youth have improved since the 1980s. *Volume Two* of this report series shows that in Minnesota and nationally, significant progress has been made in improving high school graduation rates and reducing school dropouts. Also, reductions have occurred in both the number and rate of child victims identified by child protective services.

## School Engagement

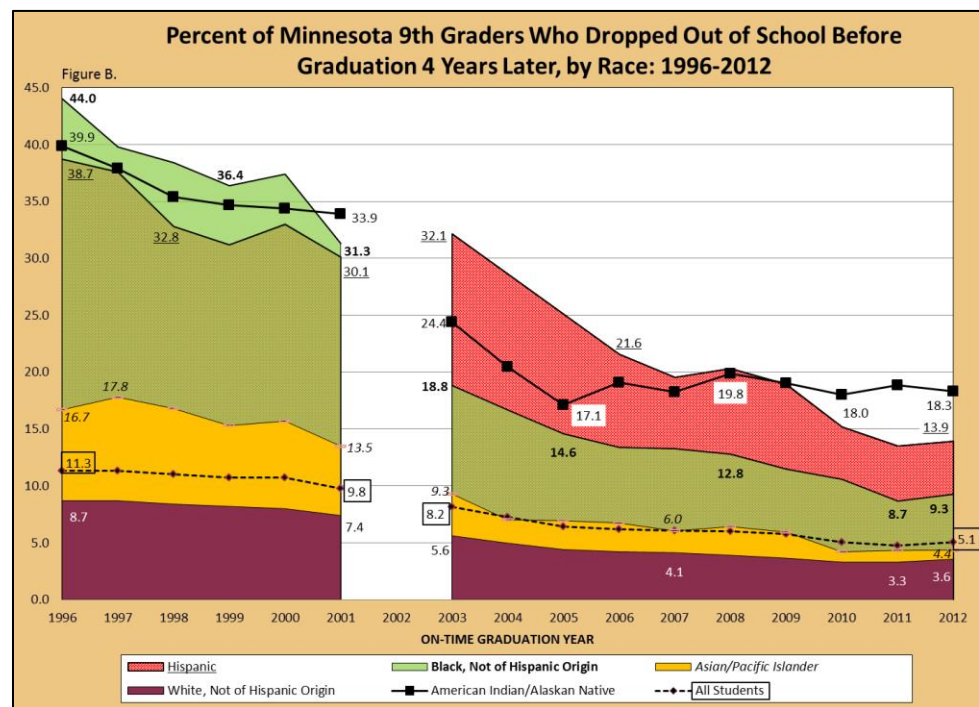
School indicators are important because success in school is a protective factor against youth delinquency. School attendance, engagement and academic success reduce the likelihood of youth engaging in delinquent behaviors. School retention and dropout prevention initiatives, new focus on positive school climate and an emphasis on the importance of high school and post-secondary degrees may have collectively worked to keep more youth engaged in school in the 2000s than in the 1980s and 1990s.

### U.S. High School Dropouts and Graduations

Nationally, the percentage of youth ages 16-to-24 who dropped out of high school in 2011 is half of what it was 30 years prior. In 1980, just over 14 percent of all youth ages 16-to-24 had dropped out of high school and did not have a high school equivalency degree. By 2011, just 7.1 percent of this age group lacked a diploma or GED.<sup>2,3</sup> Gains in school retention have been especially significant for some subpopulations, namely Hispanic youth and African American youth.<sup>4</sup> Not only has the percentage of dropouts declined, but the percentage of 18-to-24 year-olds who have graduated from high school or earned a GED in the United States has risen between 1980 and 2009.<sup>5</sup>

### Minnesota Dropouts and Graduations

Mirroring the national trend, Minnesota has seen a significant decline in high school drop-outs in the past 20 years. Since 1996, the Minnesota Department of Education has collected data on 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes and assessed their level of educational attainment four-years later.<sup>6,7</sup> Data in Figure B reflect the percentage of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who had dropped-out of school four years later, when they ought to have been graduating.<sup>b</sup>



<sup>b</sup> Data from 2002 are unavailable, perhaps suggesting a change to data collection methodology or definitions.

In 1996, just over 11 percent of all 9<sup>th</sup> graders had dropped out of school four-years later (11.3%); by 2012, the number was just over 5 percent (5.1%).<sup>c</sup> All racial and ethnic populations, including white students, saw a reduction in the percentage of dropouts between 1996 and 2012, as depicted in Figure B. While racial disparities exist, improvement in school retention across racial populations reduces delinquency risk factors for all. Along with a decline in the percentage of 9<sup>th</sup>-graders who dropped out of school comes an increase in the percentage of 9<sup>th</sup> graders who graduated “on-time” four-years later.<sup>8</sup>

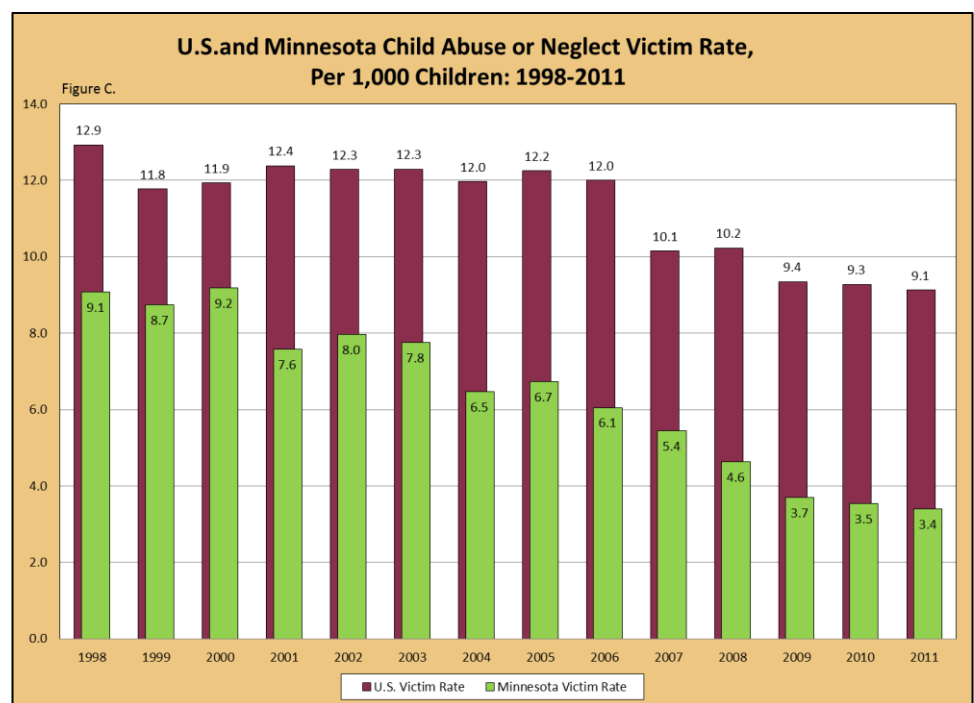
## Child Protection

Like the juvenile justice system, the child protection system has experienced declining volume since the turn of the century. In Minnesota and nationally, both the number of child victims of abuse or neglect, and the rate of victimization per 1,000 children have been declining. Exposure to violence and neglect is a known risk-factor that can negatively affect mental health and social-emotional development and contribute to delinquency.<sup>9</sup>

### Victim Counts and Rates

Between 1998 and 2011, the national number of child victims of abuse or neglect declined from approximately 903,000 to 676,000—a 25 percent decline in the number of child victims. In Minnesota, the number of child victims declined from approximately 11,500 in 1998 to 4,300 in 2011—a decrease of 62 percent.

The national rate of child victims per 1,000 children ages 0-to-17 declined from 12.9 in 1998 to 9.1 in 2011 (Figure C).<sup>10</sup> In Minnesota, the rate declined from 9.1 per 1,000 in 1998 to 3.4 per 1,000 in 2011. The full report includes additional analysis of child victims by race.<sup>11</sup> Around the same time that juvenile justice involvement was declining, so too were the number of youth in the child protection system. This suggests declining risk-factors across populations which prompts investigation into the macro socio-economic conditions between 1980 and 2010.



<sup>c</sup> The 9<sup>th</sup> grade cohort manner of measuring drop-outs means Minnesota data cannot be compared directly to the aforementioned national data.



## The Macro-Environment

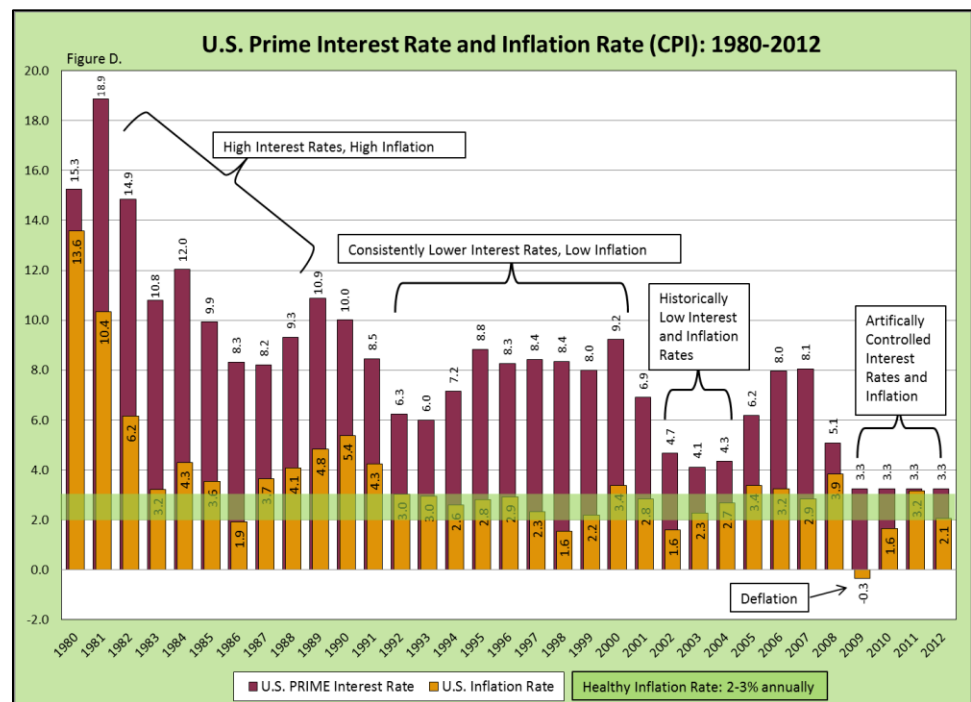
Crime and delinquency always exist in the context of the macro-environment.<sup>d</sup> In order to fully understand the environment that contributes to crime, as well as the policies, practices and perceptions related to crime, one must be cognizant of social and economic conditions. Changes in the macro-environment of the state and nation may have affected youth and their involvement in delinquency during the era between 1980 and 2010.

### The 1980s and Early 1990s

The economies of the United States and Minnesota changed significantly between 1980 and 2010. The full report explores in detail changes to state and national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as well as inflation rates, interest rates and the value of wages.

Between 1980 and the early-1990s, state and national GDPs were fluctuating between periods of growth and recession. High inflation rates, as measured by changes to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and high interest rates kept a damper on the economy until both began to stabilize in the 1990s (Figure D).

Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, unemployment and the percentage of people living in poverty were high (Figures E and F). The full report illustrates that racial minorities were especially likely to experience high poverty and unemployment throughout this era as compared to the white population. In addition, the purchasing power of the average hourly wage was declining through the 1980s and into the mid-1990s.



### The Mid-1990s to 2012

In the mid- to late-1990s, the economy took a turn for the better. Above average GDP coupled with low inflation and interest rates contributed to the moniker: “The Roaring ‘90s.” By the late-1990s and into the 2000s, unemployment was declining (Figure E) and the value of the hourly wage began increasing.

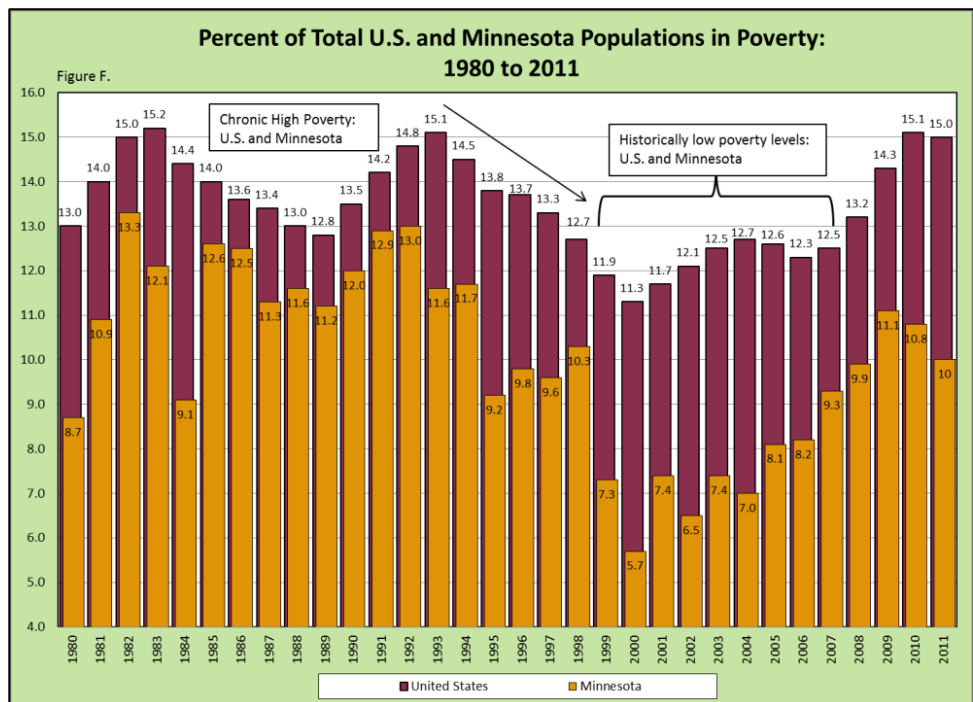
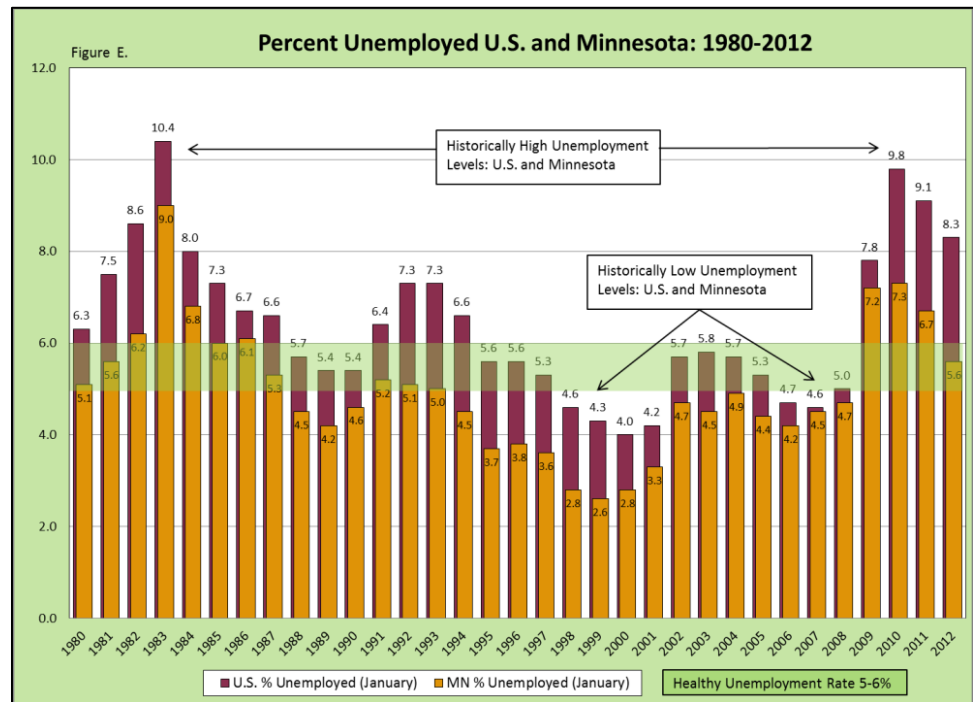
<sup>d</sup> Macro is a prefix meaning the “large-scale” structure, behavior, characteristics or performance of economies, social conditions or populations.

Lower levels of unemployment and a stronger dollar aided many in moving out of poverty. Between 1999 and 2007, the nation as a whole experienced the lowest poverty levels in 30 years. Minnesota specifically saw a large decrease in the percentage of the population in poverty (Figure F). In 2000, less than 6 percent of the total state population was below the poverty threshold. The years of low poverty and low unemployment correspond to the years when involvement in the juvenile justice system was rapidly declining.

In 2008, the economy entered a period of recession. While economic indicators have since been improving, they have not returned to pre-recession levels. Periods of high unemployment and high poverty are potentially harmful to children. Economic hardship has been associated with family discord and conflict—another risk factor for delinquency. Youth who are exposed to family violence are also more likely to experience other risk-factors for delinquency, including substance abuse and mental health issues.<sup>12</sup>

Conversely, a strong economy can provide families with the resources needed to meet children's basic needs, and result in less stress on caregivers' relationships with each other and their children.

Strong economies also make funding available to communities for youth programs and interventions, as well as for schools and community organizations. Finally, strong economies can absorb young, unskilled workers — whereas those jobs are taken by adults in times of lower economic growth.





## Funding to Address Crime and Delinquency

The robust economy of the mid-1990s not only benefitted individuals and families; it also benefitted the federal and state governments. This prosperity allowed the federal government to allocate significant funding to states for crime prevention and intervention. This was part of an effort to allow states to determine the interventions and programs needed in their unique communities to stem the tide of crime and violence.

### Funding to States Prior to the 1990s

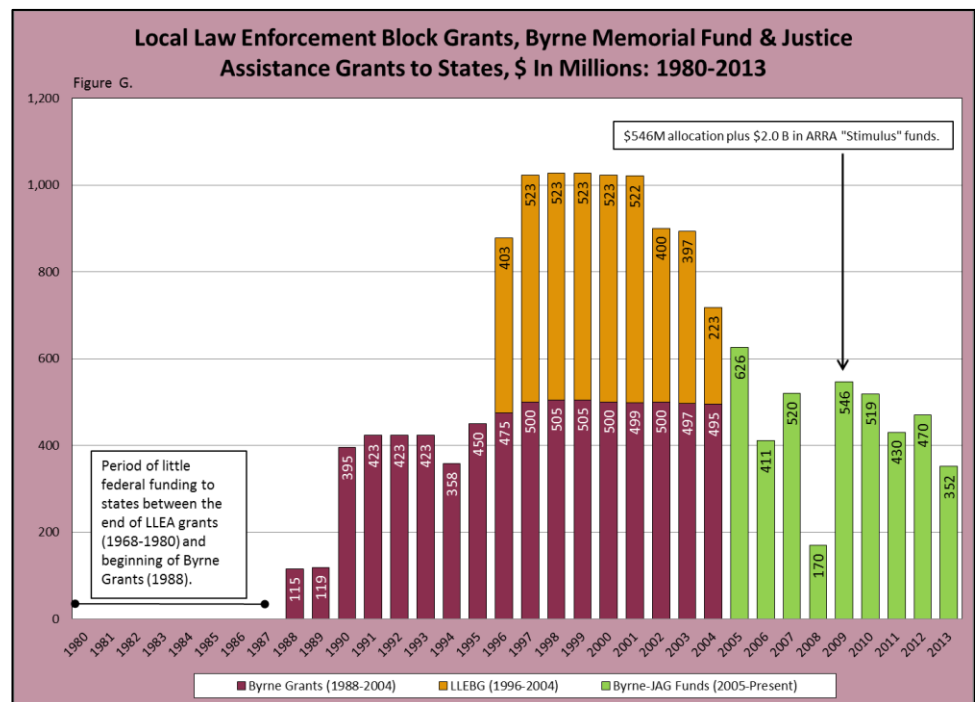
#### Law Enforcement Grants

One of the older federal funding streams to states was the *Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA)* established in 1968. LEAA grants were intended to “encourage states and units of general local government to prepare and adopt comprehensive law enforcement plans based on state and local problems.”<sup>13</sup> LLEA appropriations peaked around 1975 with more than 900 million allocated to states and then declined to nearly nothing by the start of the 1980s.<sup>14</sup>

In 1986 congress passed the *Anti-Drug Abuse Act (ADAA)* which renewed block grants to states for prevention of drug related crimes. In 1988, the ADAA was reauthorized and established the *Byrne Memorial Formula Grants* (Figure G). Byrne became the primary criminal justice grant program to states with the purpose of helping local law enforcement agencies “control violent and drug-related crime, improve operations, and build coordination and cooperation among the components of the criminal justice system.”<sup>15</sup>

In 1996, an additional funding source, the *Local Law Enforcement Block Grants Program (LLEBG)*, was established to provide local units of government with federal funds to hire police officers or create programs

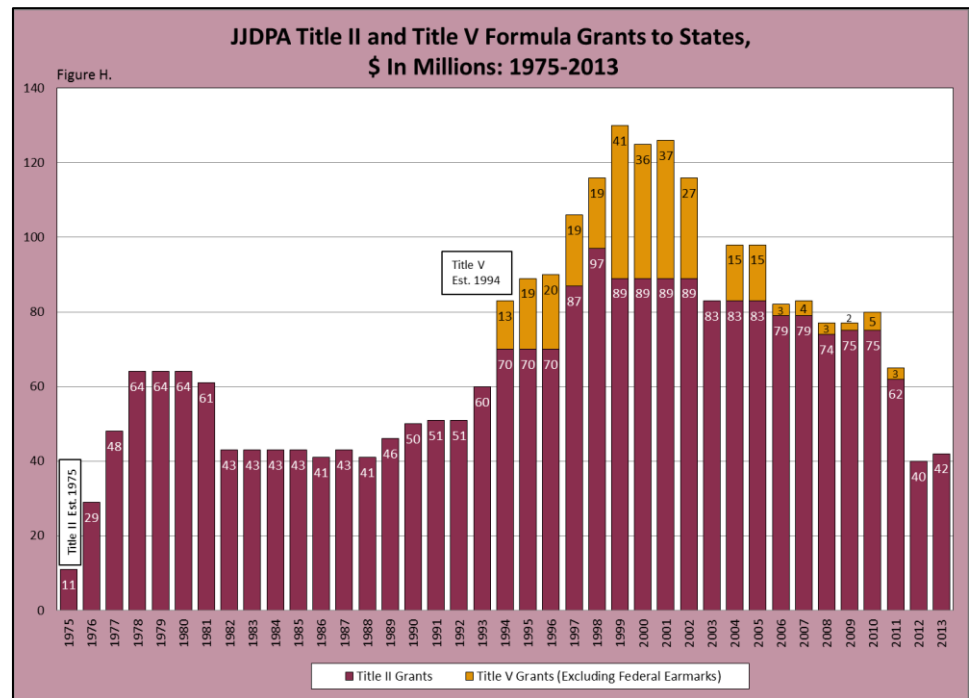
to combat crime and increase public safety.<sup>16</sup> In 2005, *Byrne* grants and *LLEB* grants were combined into the *Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (Byrne/JAG)*.<sup>17</sup>



## Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (JJDP): Title II and Title V Funds

One of the oldest federal funding streams for juvenile crime prevention and intervention is the *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (JJDP)*. This act established the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) which remains the federal government's authority on juvenile justice issues. The *JJDP* includes two funding streams to states: *Title II* funds to states are distributed to local communities and non-profits for activities related to delinquency prevention and intervention; *Title V* funds (established 1994) have a similar purview but must be allocated to local units of government or tribes for "collaborative, community-focused, community-based delinquency prevention."<sup>18</sup>

The highest levels of *Title II* grants to states for delinquency prevention and intervention occurred between 1997 and 2002. In 2012 and 2013 support to states for delinquency activities fell to less than half of what it was at the peak (Figure H).<sup>19</sup> Similarly, *Title V* funding to local units of government were highest in the mid- to late-1990s and early 2000s. Since 2006, a total of less than \$5 million was allocated to states, and the funding for *Title V* has been nearly eliminated as of 2012 and 2013.<sup>20,21</sup>



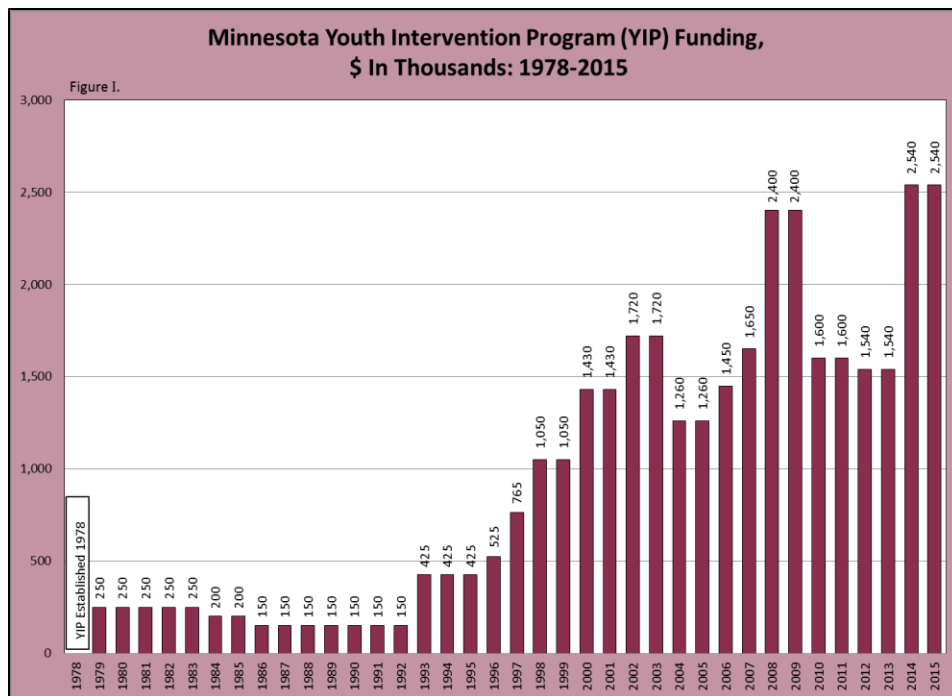
## Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act

In 1986, the *Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act (SDFSA)* was enacted. Formula grants to states were to go to preventing drug-abuse and violence prevention activities for school-aged youth. Funding could be used to develop instructional materials; counseling services; community service projects and conflict resolution; peer mediation; mentoring; safe zones for passage to and from school; installing metal detectors and hiring security personnel.<sup>22</sup> *SDFSA* funding was highest in 1997 and 1998 (\$531 million each year) and remained high into the 2000s.<sup>23</sup> As of 2010, however, the funding stream to schools has been eliminated.<sup>24</sup>

## Minnesota Youth Intervention Programs

One of the only dedicated, state-level, delinquency prevention funding streams supports the *Minnesota Youth Intervention Program (YIP)* established in 1978. In statute, a YIP Program is defined as: "...A nonresidential community based programs providing advocacy, education, counseling and referral services to youth and their families experiencing personal, familial, school, legal or chemical problems..."<sup>25</sup> YIP money is awarded through a competitive application process.

As with federal programs, funding generally increased throughout the 1990s. Presently, YIP has been allocated the highest amount yet in 2014 and 2015 at over \$2.54 million per year (Figure I).<sup>26</sup> YIP activities are based in community non-profits, schools, and law enforcement and probation agencies. Services range from academic support to drop-in youth centers and justice-system diversion programs.



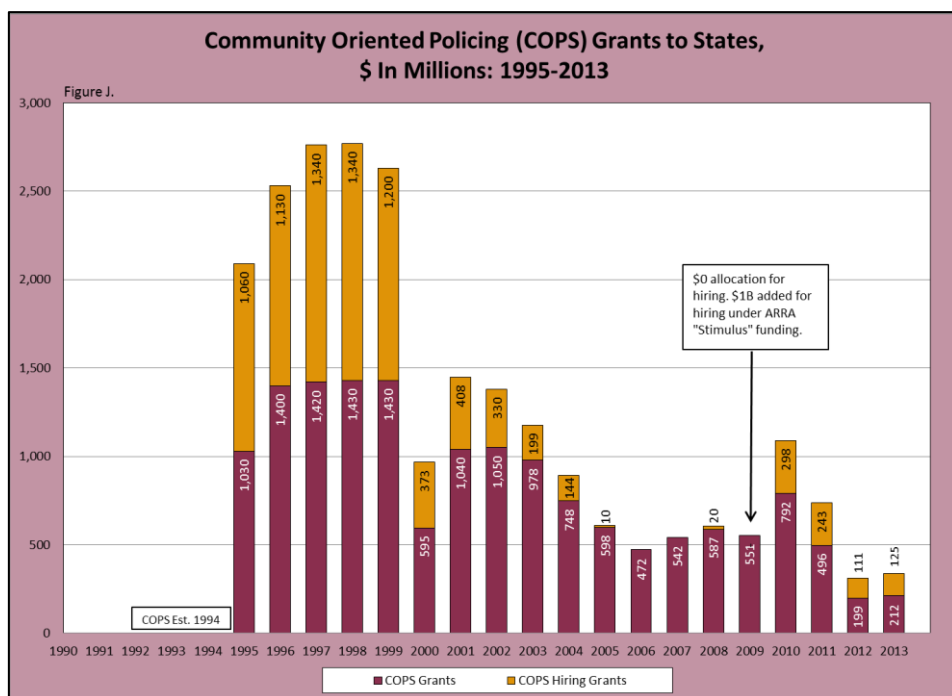
## Funding to States Since the 1990s

The strong economy of the mid-1990s coupled with concern over the high youth violent crime rate resulted in numerous new federal funding streams to curb crime and delinquency. The following are examples of new funding streams.

### Community Oriented Policing Grants

As a part of the 1994 *Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act*, the *Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)* was established within the Department of Justice. The goal of the office was to advance the practice of community policing in state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies.<sup>27</sup>

In the mid-1990s, significant funding was allocated to states to implement community-oriented policing



as well as to hire additional police officers (Figure J). The *COPS in Schools (CIS)* grant program was developed to help law enforcement agencies hire and train School Resource Officers (SROs) in primary and secondary schools.<sup>28</sup> Minnesota did experience an increase in the number of sworn law enforcement officers in relation to the state population during the mid-1990s. The full report contains additional detail about increases to law enforcement personnel in Minnesota.

## Juvenile Mentoring Grants

The *Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP)* was first funded in 1994.<sup>29</sup> In this program, competitive grants were given to local law enforcement agencies that collaborated with public or private nonprofits to create and support mentoring programs.<sup>30</sup> The purpose of the *JUMP* program was to “support one-to-one mentoring programs for youth at risk of educational failure, dropping out of school, or involvement in delinquent activities, including gangs.”<sup>31</sup> JUMP funding was highest in 2010 (\$100 million) and was funded in 2013 at \$90 million.

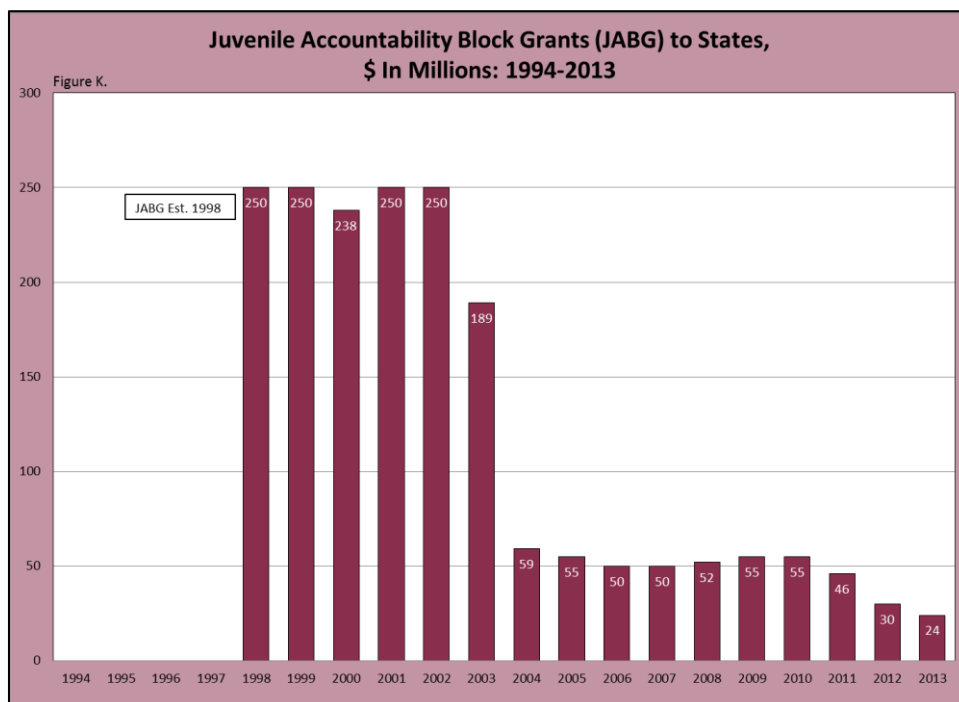
## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Grants

Established in 1994, the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC)* formula grants are intended to “support the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools.”<sup>32</sup> These grants help students meet state and local standards in core academic subjects and offer a broad array of enrichment activities to complement regular academic programs.”<sup>33</sup> *21<sup>st</sup> CCLC* funding was highest in 2009 (\$1.11 billion) and funded in 2013 at \$1.09 billion.

## Juvenile Accountability Block Grants

The *Juvenile Accountability Block Grants (JABG)* were authorized in 1998 and provided funding to states and units of local government to address juvenile crime by encouraging accountability-based reforms by states and localities.<sup>34</sup> JABG funds are allowable under 11 purpose areas in these categories: hiring or training new juvenile judges, prosecutors, and other court officials; building, expanding or operating juvenile detention and corrections facilities;

establishing drug court programs for juvenile offenders; and assisting prosecutors to address drug, gang, and youth violence more effectively.<sup>35</sup> JABG funding was highest from 1998 to 1999 and from 2001 to 2002 (\$250 million each year). In 2013, JABG funding to states was just \$24 million (Figure K).



## Minnesota Juvenile Policy and Practice

In the 30 years since 1980, many changes to juvenile justice policy and practice have occurred in Minnesota and nationally. Between 1980 and the mid-1990s, the juvenile justice system embraced a punitive, accountability-based philosophy that led to harsher consequences for youth; increased the reach of the justice system into other arenas such as schools; and enacted more collateral consequences for delinquent behavior that can follow youth into adulthood.

In the past 15 years especially, significant investment has been made in prevention and intervention programming for youth, prompting a call for evaluation to determine whether the methods were effective in reducing youth delinquency or known risk-factors. Evidence-based practices backed by scientific research and “model programs” suitable for replication began to emerge at all stages of the justice system.

Youth-serving systems began to identify philosophies and practices that yielded improvement and phase out ineffective or (worse yet) harmful practices. During this time, service systems renewed emphasis on community and victim restoration; offender rehabilitation and reentry; the unique gender, cultural and mental health needs of youth in the justice system; and the importance of a strength-based approach and family engagement when working with youth.

The following sections highlight, in five year increments, key changes to juvenile policy in Minnesota and the nation between 1980 and 2013. The year 1994 is presented singly, as it was an exceptionally important year for juvenile justice policy and practice.

In the full report, each era is divided into distinct practice areas including law enforcement policy, court policy, chemical and mental health policy, community supervision policy, school-based statutes and data practices — to name a few. The full report includes a detailed description of each statutory change in Minnesota as well as changes to national policy. Also included in the full report is a summary of studies and task forces commissioned by the Minnesota Legislature or courts to better guide juvenile delinquency practice.

## 1980 to 1984: The Transition to Tough Justice

### 1980 to 1984 Overview

Throughout the 1960s and '70s, both adult and juvenile crime rates rose in the United States. A well-documented contributor to the rise in crime in the U.S. was the emergence of illegal drug markets. Throughout the '70s drugs, notably marijuana, became more commonplace among the middle-class, and cocaine re-emerged as the “champagne of drugs” because it was expensive and used among high-status people. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency reported that **1979** was the highest year for drug use in the United States, when one person in 10 reportedly used drugs regularly.<sup>36</sup>

The federal government attempted to curb the social ills connected to drug use. In **1970**, the federal *Controlled Substance Act* passed, assigning all substances a “schedule” based on their potential for abuse. This act required mandatory prison sentences for the manufacture, possession and distribution of drugs, based on their schedule. In **1971**, President Richard Nixon declared a *War on Crime* and, more specifically, a *War on Drugs*. By the early 1980s, prevention messaging including First Lady Nancy Reagan’s *Just Say No* campaign (**1982**) and *Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E, 1983)* were targeted at youth in an attempt to deter new users.<sup>37,38</sup>

As the popularity of powdered cocaine began to wane, drug mafias introduced crack, a form of smokeable cocaine.<sup>39</sup> The highly addictive nature of crack coupled with small, cheap doses made distribution easy among marginalized populations in inner cities. The sharp increase in crime in the mid-1980s, especially violent crime, is attributed to the crack cocaine epidemic in the United States beginning in **1984**.<sup>40</sup> In **1984**, “Safe and Drug-Free School Zones” were created under federal law, which allowed for enhanced penalties for drug sale or possession around schools.

In the 1980s, a get-tough-on-crime attitude permeated the justice system. In Minnesota, this era signaled a shift from a benevolent, rehabilitative focus for juveniles to a punitive, accountability-based approach. The period from 1980 to 1984 included a change in the purpose of juvenile court for delinquents; increased circumstances whereby juveniles could be referred for adult prosecution; and juvenile felonies taken into consideration for sentencing if youth continued to offend as adults.

Also during this period, “juvenile petty offenses” were established in Minnesota statute, which moved low-level drinking and drug offenses, as well as age-based status offenses, out of the realm of delinquency proceedings. While this limited the severity of consequences for youth who committed these acts, it also limited legal protections — such as the right to public defense. In the same era, uniform rules of juvenile court procedure were established for use in juvenile courts across Minnesota.

Finally, the 1980s yielded broader application of crime-victim rights in statute. Increasingly, the rights afforded victims of adult criminal offenses were being applied to persons victimized by acts of juvenile delinquency. Statutes also began to require collection and retention of data related to accused and adjudicated delinquents.



## 1985 to 1989: Growing Unrest

### 1985 to 1989 Overview

In the mid- to late-1980s, reaction to the nation's drug epidemic was dominating federal and state level policy. Federal and Minnesota laws were amended to mandate harsher sanctions for controlled substance offenses. Gun violence and gang activity were also of significant concern. During the mid-1980s and into the 1990s, there was a significant influx of handguns to inner cities in connection to protection of drug markets.<sup>41</sup>

In **1988**, criminal gangs were defined in Minnesota statute and certain gang-related acts committed by juveniles were designated as grounds for transfer to adult court prosecution. During this era, felony-level court proceedings for youth ages 16 or older became open to the public. Minnesota adopted "school zones" and "park zones" in **1989** and added drug sales in these areas to the definitions of controlled substance crimes.

Between 1985 and 1989, additional protections for youth were implemented in Minnesota. In **1988**, the former language of "dependent and neglected youth" was replaced by "children in need of protection or services (CHIPS)." Youth under the age of 10 who committed delinquent acts were reclassified as CHIPS cases, rather than delinquency, establishing a clear minimum age of delinquency jurisdiction in Minnesota.

Additional protections during this era included a "voluntary" provision added to youth waiver of counsel, and a statute requiring that a written case plan be prepared for delinquency dispositions. The case plan was to ensure that youth and families were clear on court-ordered conditions and the services they were to receive.

In the late 1980s, Minnesota had two high-profile events related to youth: In **1988**, a 16-year-old murdered his parents and two younger siblings with an axe near Rochester. In **1989**, 11-year-old Jacob Wetterling was abducted at gunpoint on his way home from a convenience store in the town of St. Joseph. These crimes raised concerns about youth both as perpetrators and victims of violent crime.

At the federal level, states electing to receive certain federal funding, including Minnesota, were directed to investigate *Disproportionate Minority Confinement (DMC)*. DMC referred to the phenomenon where youth of color in the justice system were being admitted to secure detention and to secure placements at rates higher than their white counterparts. States were directed to gather data on the use of secure placements, by race, to assess the extent to which DMC was an issue in their jurisdictions.

Also in the late 1980s, the U.S. Supreme Court continued its foray into the issue of the death penalty for those who committed crimes as juveniles. In these cases, the court cited specific ages which were too young to receive the death penalty (15 or under at the time of offense), as well as not-too-young for the death penalty (ages 16 or 17 at the time of offense). The death penalty for offenses committed as a juvenile would remain an issue into the 2000s.

## 1990 to 1993: The Rise in Violent Crime

### 1990 to 1993 Overview

The crack cocaine epidemic is purported to have ended nationally around **1990** when demand for the drug began to fall due to an absence of new users.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, the youth rate of involvement in juvenile delinquency, particularly violent crime, was rising rapidly.

During this time period, Minnesota allowed for tax levies to offset the relatively new practice of placing police officers in schools. In addition, the Minnesota Department of Education was required to report on incidents of dangerous weapons in schools. Similarly, “using or brandishing a firearm” became grounds for transfer to adult court, and a new statute was created defining *crimes committed for the benefit of a gang* (**1991**), with enhanced penalties.

Between 1990 and 1993, the demand for justice system services was also growing. During this era, no fewer than eight legislative studies were ordered in Minnesota, exploring the need for additional juvenile facilities and beds; assessing aftercare services and treatment availability; establishing juvenile justice system guidelines; and establishing probation standards. The recommendations of many of these task forces were adopted in significant juvenile justice system legislation in **1994**. In the meantime, the Minnesota Department of Corrections was authorized to subsidize the construction of secure juvenile centers around the state.

Also during this era, the juvenile justice system in Minnesota was beginning to move toward assessment of the needs of offenders. Chemical health assessments became a requirement for youth involved in controlled substance related offenses; sex offender assessments were created for adults and juveniles involved in criminal sexual conduct; and mental health screening tools for youth in secure detention were piloted. In **1993**, a Supreme Court task force also began investigating potential racial bias in Minnesota’s judicial system. At the federal level, the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* established 14 categories of disability for which students could receive special education services and accommodations in schools.

The early 1990s were a time in which offenders still received harsh sanctions, but the system had to be more selective about gatekeeping. For instance, in **1992**, Minnesota implemented pre-trial diversion programs for low-level adult offenders to reduce strain on the justice system.<sup>43</sup> This statute was the precursor for the creation of juvenile pre-trial diversion programs in Minnesota. Also in **1992**, Minnesota authorized the creation of an adult “boot camp,” *The Challenge Incarceration Program*. Militaristic style boot camps were popular during this era as they provided both a consequence and a less costly alternative to incarceration. Throughout the 1990s, the system would be challenged to make the best use of resources in light of an ever-increasing volume of offenders.

## 1994: A Year of Action

### 1994 Overview

**1994** was the peak year for the juvenile violent crime rate, and a significant year in both federal and Minnesota law.<sup>e,44</sup> The federal government passed many crime control measures including the expansion of gun control; “zero tolerance” for weapons in schools; prison expansion; sanctions for gang-related activity; and “three strikes” provisions for repeat offenders that resulted in long prison terms. In some cases states were required to adopt federal rules, while in others states voluntarily replicated federal policies.

In the **mid-1990s**, numerous federal funding streams were created to increase the capacity of local law enforcement and aide state-level prevention and intervention programs for delinquency. The **mid- to late-1990s** saw billions of federal dollars flowing to states for new and innovative accountability and intervention efforts. Funding streams established or expanded in **1994** included: *JJDP Title V* and *Title II Delinquency Prevention and Intervention Programs*; *Community Oriented Policing*; *Juvenile Mentoring Programs*; and *Drug Courts*.

Minnesota made many revisions to juvenile justice law based, in part, on the myriad studies of the juvenile justice system completed in the early 1990s. Notably, juvenile petty offenses were expanded to include most first-time misdemeanor level offenses; juvenile pretrial diversion programming was established; new criteria for transferring juveniles to adult court were adopted; and a blended sentencing mechanism, *Extended Jurisdiction Juvenile*, was created which kept certain serious juvenile offenders under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court until age 21.

Also in **1994**, greater allowances were made for sharing data and information between police, diversion programs, schools and probation officers. Schools specifically were to be notified if a juvenile was arrested for an act in which the victim was a student or staff at the school. Another list of offenses was also created whereby schools would notified even if the offense was not committed at school or related to students or staff.

Around this time, new terms began to appear in juvenile justice legislation related to the need for a continuum of care and restorative justice, as well as culturally appropriate and gender-responsive programming. Minnesota also began to fund new initiatives, such as pilot programs for truancy service centers and *Gang Resistance Education Training (G.R.E.A.T.)*. Mental health screenings were expanded from youth held in detention to all youth alleged or found to be delinquent or in need of protection or services.

Finally, in **1994**, more than \$20 million in state funding was bonded to construct additional secure detention-and-treatment facilities for juveniles. Numerous studies were ordered to determine the effectiveness of juvenile programming and to establish uniform program standards and statewide availability.

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<sup>e</sup> Violent crimes as defined by the FBI include murder, aggravated assault, robbery and rape.

## 1995 to 1999: Pilots and Programs

### 1995 to 1999 Overview

Despite a preliminary reduction in violent crime, scholars of this era coined the term “superpredators” to describe a new class of youth who were particularly violent or remorseless in their behavior.<sup>45</sup> Two high-profile school shootings in **1998** and **1999** further contributed to a society fearful of violent youth. In Minnesota, the volume of violent crimes committed by juveniles was decreasing during this period but the total volume of youth involved in Minnesota’s juvenile justice system continued to increase. In response, almost all misdemeanor-level offenses committed by juveniles were reclassified as petty misdemeanors.

In the arena of controlled substances, “club drugs” associated with raves and other youth culture including ecstasy, GHB, ketamine and methamphetamine grew more prominent in the **late-1990s** and **2000s**. Of these, methamphetamine was the next drug to rise to the level of a state and national public health and law enforcement issue. By **1997**, Minnesota Public Radio was covering a story on methamphetamine speeding through the Midwest, and law enforcement agents were comparing it to the crack epidemic of the 1980s.<sup>46</sup>

In Minnesota, high juvenile justice system volume resulted in another wave of secure juvenile facilities opening between **1995** and **1999**. Near the end of the decade, however, the Minnesota Legislature placed a moratorium on construction of large juvenile facilities and restricted the number of new beds licensed in the state. The Departments of Corrections and Human Services were directed to adopt joint facility-licensing standards for increased consistency across youth placements.

Also during this era, new restrictions were placed on use of facilities in Minnesota. At the time of disposition, court orders were required to include a statement on the intended outcome of the out-of-home placement. Also, new statutes went into effect requiring case plans and transition plans for all youth in placements over 30 days.

In the five years prior to the new millennium, increased attention was given to youth on probation. The Department of Corrections began distributing funds for caseload reduction to counties, and the legislature funded pilot programs on intensive supervision probation (ISP) and probation officers in schools. At the end of the decade (**1999**) all probation delivery systems in the state were to institute a risk-classification system to determine the level of supervision for individual juvenile probationers.

The latter half of the 1990s was a time of economic prosperity in Minnesota and the U.S., resulting in significant federal and state funding to support and test new interventions for youth. Truancy reduction, teen courts and community-based juvenile assessment centers were all piloted by the Minnesota Legislature during this era. In addition, restorative justice programming, victim-offender mediation and drug courts grew in prominence. Numerous legislative task forces were convened in an attempt to measure the effectiveness and outcomes of these pilots and programs.

## 2000 to 2004: Funding Cuts and Evidence-Based Practices

### 2000 to 2004 Overview

By the turn of the century, juvenile crime had begun a downward trend. It is not clear if the change was the result of economic prosperity that included declining unemployment and poverty, significant resources allocated for prevention and intervention, or a combination thereof. It has also been suggested that the **2001** terrorist attacks diverted the focus of local law enforcement activity toward counterterrorism and national security, resulting in fewer crime and delinquency arrests.<sup>47,48</sup>

During this period, federal support for juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention began to decline. *Juvenile Accountability Block Grants* declined by \$130 million between 2003 and 2004; *Title V Grants* were cut nearly in half between 2002 and 2004 (\$27 million to \$15 million); *COPS* hiring grants and community oriented policing grants also declined significantly (See Figure DD). *Local Law Enforcement Block Grants* were cut from \$523 million in 2000 to \$223 million in 2004.

Simultaneously, there was increasing pressure to demonstrate the effectiveness of youth programming. Many interventions funded in the 1990s were being evaluated for evidence of reductions in risk-factors and delinquency. Funded programs were increasingly required to state intended outcomes and report data to funders. Programs and practices demonstrating positive outcomes were labeled *effective, promising, model programs*, or *evidence-based* meaning they were worthy of replication, continued funding or expansion.

In **2002**, the federal requirement to monitor the justice system for Disproportionate Minority Confinement expanded to include the entire spectrum of juvenile justice decision points, ranging from arrest to adult certification. The “DMC” acronym was changed from Disproportionate Minority *Confinement* to Disproportionate Minority *Contact*.

Most juvenile justice-related statute changes in Minnesota between 2000 and 2004 corrected or clarified legislation adopted in the 1990s. A new set of court procedures for CHIPS cases was adopted in **2000**, following its separation from delinquency statutes in 1999. Also post-2000, the Department of Corrections began providing juvenile treatment grants to counties to offset costs of out-of-home placements. In **2003**, the Departments of Corrections and Human Services completed joint facility-licensing policies for youth programs, often referred to as the “Umbrella Rules.”

Minnesota implemented mental health screenings for most justice system involved youth in **2003**. Data collection and collateral consequences for juveniles continued to expand: juvenile fingerprinting and DNA expanded; the 10-year ban on firearm possession for certain offenders became a lifetime ban; and probation officers and schools were allowed to share more information. Despite overall declines in violent crime, Minnesota had its first high-profile school shooting when two students opened fire at Rocori High School in the town Cold Spring in **2003**.

## 2005 to 2013: Youth Development, Collateral Consequences and Justice System Retraction

### 2005 to 2013 Overview

Between 2005 and 2013, federal funding to states for juvenile justice activities continued to decline. The economic recession, beginning in **2008**, virtually eliminated federal and state funding for crime prevention and intervention efforts.

Collateral consequences for persons with criminal records became a greater concern during this era, as arrests and adjudications can affect employment, housing, school loans, military service, certain professional licensures, firearm ownership and other activities. Advocacy groups became active in trying to limit negative effects of formal system contacts on youth and adults. In **2005**, the Minnesota Legislature directed the creation of a new chapter in statute detailing “collateral sanctions.”

The punitive approaches of the 1980s and 1990s were being discredited by researchers as ineffective or even likely to exacerbate delinquent behavior. Examples include “Scared straight” programming, “shock incarceration,” and boot-camp style programming that focused solely on punishment. Further, several Minnesota jurisdictions began to limit use of out-of-home placement. In **2005**, three of Minnesota’s largest counties adopted the *Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative* to divert youth from secure detention and to ensure that admissions relied upon objective, validated risk-assessment tools. During this era, admissions to juvenile correctional facilities all around Minnesota declined to the point that numerous facilities down-sized, changed their service population, or closed altogether.

Entering this era, methamphetamine production and use continued to be an issue. In **2005**, national and state legislation was passed to limit access to materials required to manufacture methamphetamine. These laws, as well as law enforcement initiatives, are credited with the decline in production and use of methamphetamine. Sex offender management and treatment remained a state and national challenge.

School safety remained an issue during this era. In **2005**, a second high-profile school shooting occurred in the Red Lake American Indian community in northern Minnesota. Minnesota established a School Safety Center in **2006** and implemented lock-down drills and anti-bullying policies in schools.

Finally, new philosophies and practice models emerged related to working with youth. Research on adolescent brain development revealed that human brains are still developing well into their 20s, especially the parts that control executive decision-making related to impulsivity, full consideration of consequences and risk, and emotional control. This 21<sup>st</sup> century ideology has been referred to as “the fourth wave of juvenile justice” whereby the system is transitioning from a punitive focus to one that balances youth development, personal responsibility and public safety.<sup>49</sup> In addition, greater understanding of the effects of trauma and neglect on child development fostered development of more appropriate interventions and sanctions. These developmental factors also influenced U.S. Supreme Court decisions to outlaw the death penalty (**2005**) and restrict the use of life-in-prison-without-parole for crimes committed as youth (**2010** and **2012**).



## Conclusion

The rise and fall in juvenile crime observed between 1980 and 2010 cannot be attributed to any single cause or condition, rather was plausibly the cumulative result of changing populations, socio-economic conditions, prevention and intervention funding, and policy and practices related to at-risk youth and delinquency.

In the late 1980s and early- to mid-1990s, when juvenile crime was rising, so was the population of youth of age to enter the juvenile justice system. In addition, illegal drug markets, gang-related violence and firearm proliferation were common, and were met with hardline attitudes and severe sanctions. During most of this era, poverty and unemployment levels were high, the real value of wages was declining and juvenile justice policy was predominantly reactive. Little attention was given to underlying drivers of delinquent behavior or needs of youth until the volume began to strain the resources of law enforcement, courts, youth correctional facilities and community probation services.

In the late 1990s and into the new millennium, the national economy gained considerable momentum. Socio-economic indicators, including poverty and unemployment, declined dramatically, as did inflation and interest rates. There was a significant decline in the number of youth involved in the juvenile justice system. The strong economy resulted in billions of dollars to states from the federal government for delinquency prevention and intervention initiatives, including measures to keep youth out of the system through diversion and community-based services. Gradually, the retributive justice attitudes and policies of the 1980s and 1990s were replaced with restorative justice measures in the 2000s.

The newest era of juvenile justice is one that promotes the use of objective risk-assessment tools; identification of underlying issues for youth such as trauma, victimization, chemical abuse and mental health concerns; culturally- and gender-responsive programming in the least restrictive setting necessary to protect public safety; and strength-based services that engage families and other stakeholders key to youths' success. Reducing long-term collateral consequences of system involvement is another hallmark of this era of practice.

Practitioners and policy makers of the 2000s are more likely to support strategies that have been proven effective through research and outcome evaluation. Evidence-based interventions have emerged not only across the different stages of the justice system but also across youth-serving fields. In addition, continuing advancements in child and brain development research support the theory that youth do not possess the same decision-making capacity as adults and should not be held to the same standard of culpability, which illuminates the need for developmentally appropriate sanctions and interventions.

While scientific methods of program and policy evaluation have gained ground in the field of juvenile justice, declining crime is often met with declining resources. Flagging funding means fewer programs, fewer staff and fewer training and development opportunities for youth-serving professionals. As the number of youth aging into juvenile justice system jurisdiction rises, it would behoove Minnesota and the nation to have both fiscal resources and the theoretical foundation to respond effectively to a new generation.

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